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THE CHAMBER OVER THE GATE.

BY HENRY LONGFELLOW.

Is it so far from thee
Thou canst no longer see
In the Chamber over the Gate
The old man desolate,
Weeping and wailing sore
For his son, who is no more?
O Absalom, my son!

Is it so long ago
That cry of human woe
From the walled city came,
Calling on his dear name,
That it has died away
In the distance of to-day?
O Absalom, my son!

There is no far nor near,
There is neither there nor here,
There is neither soon nor late,
In that Chamber over the Gate,
Nor any long ago
To that cry of human woe,
O Absalom, my son!

From the ages that are past
The voice comes like a blast.
Over seas that wreck and drown,
Over tumult of traffic and town;
And from the ages yet to be
Come the echoes back to me,
O Absalom, my son!

Somewhere at every hour
The watchman on the tower
Looks forth and sees the feet
Approach of the hurrying feet
Of messengers, that bear
The tidings of despair.
O Absalom, my son!

He goes forth from the door,
Who shall return no more.
With him our joy departs;
The light goes out in our hearts;
In the Chamber over the gate
We sit disconsolate.
O Absalom, my son!

That 'tis a common grief
Bringeth slight relief;
Ours is the bitterest loss,
Ours is the heaviest cross;
And forever the cry will be
"Would God I had died for thee,
O Absalom, my son!"

WHAT IS REBELLION?

BY P. J. BROWN.

You may think it strange that we present such a question, when the terms "rebels," "fanatics," "certain element," as against "loyalty," "obedient and faithful brethren," have been so copiously used in our church literature in the past few years. But, gentle reader, it is not strange. We maintain that it is an open, and an important question: What is rebellion?

The common definition is: "Resistance to lawful authority." Correct; no better can be given. But what is *lawful* authority? Here the room for difference comes in, and in order to get the question more understandingly before the mind of the reader, we will say, none but *lawful* authority has any claim upon any man or set of men; and resistance to *unlawful* authority is *not* rebellion, but an effort to maintain lawful authority, usually called patriotism, and hence, while the Roman Catholic church called Luther a "rebel," the Protestant Christian world calls him a "patriot." But, says one, is there then, sometimes, a conflict of power without a rebellion? We answer, no; there never was and never can be a conflict of powers unless there is a rebellion connected with it somewhere. Where, then, were the rebels, and who were the rebels, in the conflict between Martin Luther and the Romish clergy? We answer, most unhesitatingly, the Romish clergy were rebels, from the Pope down to the lowest official, and even every lay member, soldier or civilian, who took part in the conflict against Luther and the reformation, were rebels. Yes, every one of them. They were rebels against lawful authority.

To define our position still more clearly, we will say with St. Paul, "There is no power but of God, the powers that are are ordained of God." Of course, Paul means all lawful authority is of God. The quotation admits of no other interpretation. There are a great variety of powers that are not from God. The devil himself wields a mighty power, but we cannot admit it to be ordained of God; neither, indeed, is his power, whether wielded by himself or by proxy, at any time or place, wielded in any way but in rebellion against God. In the conflict referred to as having been waged between Luther and the Roman hier-

archy, Luther was gallantly and patriotically, contending for the right—that is, for the gospel of Christ, which is "the power of God unto salvation." Hence he was a champion, and not a rebel; while they on the other side were not champions, but rebels against God, in that they attempted to enforce the traditions of men upon the consciences of mankind. No matter how much they professed to teach the law of God, whenever they mixed their own traditions with it, they turned "the truth of God into a lie," and stood before him as rebels. No matter how much they denounced Luther as a rebel or a heretic, the awful truth to all eternity stares them in the face, that they were the rebels.

A somewhat similar conflict waged upon this continent a little more than a century ago. In this, as in all other conflicts, there was rebellion, but who were the rebels? The British said the American colonists were the rebels. They treated them as such. They hung some of them, starved others in prisonships, confiscated their property, and in every conceivable manner traduced the good name of our ancestors. What do we call them to-day? *Patriots and martyrs to the sacred cause of human liberty.* You see it largely depends as to who the judge is to decide who the rebels are! Our judgment to-day, and the judgment of the English people a century ago, differs so materially that it would not be safe to hang the weaker party, and confiscate all their property, until a just and impartial judge has a chance to pass upon the case. That time has been reached. The civilized world to-day, gives the decision in favor of our forefathers, and the fact turns out to be that the British Ministry, parliament, king and his armies, were all rebels. Rebels against justice, rebels against human rights, trying to force unjust laws upon us; for "there is no power but of God," and what is of God is just, and He has given to every intelligent being a mind capable of discriminating between right and wrong.

Here it may be asked, what will you do in case of a division of opinion? We will gladly answer that question. We feel entirely competent to do so. Do away all selfishness and dishonesty. Discard that latter-day humbug of uniformity; give your brother the same right you ask for yourself, and there will be no conflict, and consequently no rebellion. And in every case of difference there will be Christian forbearance, and the division of sentiment and practice will only be to the lawful extent resulting from the difference of formation of the human brain. There is no such thing as uniformity in speech or action; no two of the inspired writers have recorded the life and actions of their Lord precisely alike. No two persons can do a given thing exactly alike; no two persons or things look precisely alike. We must allow that latitude which the Allwise Creator has stamped upon the human brain. To attempt to do otherwise is rebellion. This includes every willful violation of the law of God. To try to supplant the law of God by an attempt to force our own notions upon the consciences of men, is to say in our hearts, "I will be like the Most High," and the answer comes from the eternal throne, "Thou shalt be thrust down to hell." This refers to the first rebellion, and all others are like unto it.

Congress, O.

Selected by JULIA A. WOOD.

The Author of "God Calling Yet."

The beautiful hymn which has lately become a favorite in the Sunday school, Young People's Meetings, and Inquiry Meetings, beginning, "God calling yet," was written by Gerhard Tersteegen. Thousands who sing this hymn, and who also love to sing another precious stanza from a hymn by the same author, beginning,

"Is there a thing beneath the sun,

That strives with Thee my heart to share?" know but little of the personal history of the writer. Others who love to read,

"Thou hidden love of God, whose height,"

have never heard of the great religious happiness and elevation of soul that its German author enjoyed.

Gerhard Tersteegen, the original author of the hymns to which we have alluded, and one of the most eminent religious poets of the Reformed German church in its early days, was born in 1697, in the town of Mors, in Westphalia. He was left an orphan in boyhood by

the death of his father, and, as his mother's means were limited, he was put to work as an apprentice, when very young, at Muhlheim, on the Rhur. Here, when about fifteen years of age, he became deeply concerned for his soul, and experienced a deep and abiding spiritual work. He was riding one day to Duisburg, in a deep forest alone, when he suddenly fell ill, being thrown into violent convulsions that threatened his life. He fell upon his knees and implored God to spare his life, that he might prepare for eternity. He experienced almost immediate relief, and at once dedicated his life to Christ. An inward conflict followed, for his early religious comforts seem to have been like wandering lights, now vanishing and now appearing. He used to express this state of his experience in the words of St. Augustine:

"My heart is pained, nor can it be
At rest, till it finds rest in Thee."

But his religious perceptions became clearer; the fountains of heavenly refreshment were opened; his soul entered into the rest of divine love, and found in it a present heaven. He thus gratefully writes of the change: "He took me by the hand, he drew me away from perdition's yawning gulf, directed my eye to himself, and opened to me the unfathomable abyss of his loving heart." He seemed to be drawn into closer fellowship with God as youth ripened into manhood, and to live, as it were, on the heavenly confines as manhood fruited in a serene and cloudless old age. At the age of twenty-seven, he dedicated all his resources and energies to the cause of Christ, writing the dedication in his own blood. "God graciously called me," says, "out of the world and granted me the desire to belong to him, and to be willing to follow him. I long for an eternity that I may suitably glorify him for it."

When he was thirty years of age a great spiritual awakening was experienced at Muhlheim, and although Tersteegen shrank from public notice, he was prevailed upon to address the people on themes relating to religious experience. He began to preach in private houses, but soon compelled to enter upon more public labors. He gave up secular employments altogether, and devoted his whole time to religious instruction and to the poor. His house became famous as the Pilgrim's Cottage, and was visited, not only by the most eminent Christians of Germany, but by multitudes of people from foreign lands. Thus spending his time in communion with God, and in humble charities, and speaking to the spiritually minded people who flocked to visit him, of the consolation of his own luminous experience, and of the new discoveries that grace was constantly making to his soul. Beloved at home and revered and respected in foreign lands, his life drew near a triumphant exit, which took place April 3rd, 1769. He lived an ascetic life in his best years, practicing austerities, that no physical impediment might shut out the heavenly light or hinder the work of the Holy Spirit in conforming his soul to the will of God. He produced one hundred religious poems and spiritual songs, some of the best of which Wesley translated, and whose authorship is attributed to Wesley in most American collections of hymns. The following is a very literal translation of Tersteegen's hymn beginning,

GOD CALLING YET.

God calling yet—and shall I never hearken?
But still earth's witcheries my spirit darken;
This passing life, these passing joys, all flying,
And still my soul in dreamy slumbers lying.

God calling yet!—and I not yet arising?
So long his loving, faithful voice desisting;
So falsely his unwearied care repaying;
He calls me still—and still I am delaying.

God calling yet—loud at my door is knocking,
And I my heart, my ear, still firmer locking.
He still is ready, willing to receive me,
Is waiting now, but ah! he soon may leave me.

God calling yet!—and I no answer giving;
I dread his yoke, and am in bondage living;
Too long I linger, but not yet forsaken,
He calls me still—O my poor heart awaken!

Oh, calling yet! I can no longer tarry,
Nor to my God a heart divided carry;
Now, vain and giddy world, your charms are broken,
Sweeter than all! the voice of God hath spoken.

The great moments of life are but moments like the others. Your doom is spoken in a word or two. A single look from the eyes, a mere pressure of the hand may decide it, or of the lips though they cannot speak.

IDLENESS THE MOTHER OF MISCHIEF.

BY A. A. COBER.

Were the hare, while being pursued by the hound, suddenly to cease using his limbs, he would about as suddenly become the prey of his pursuer. The bird that ceases to use its wings no longer, hangs in the air; but, like a stone, finds its way to the ground. As soon as the farmer ceases to sow, just so soon he ceases to reap. Thus a state of inaction is barren of good results. Whenever we cease work our incomes diminish, and our wants generally increase.

Had Caesar discontinued his warrings in his struggle with the Helvetians, the Roman empire would doubtless have been overthrown by the Barbarians of the North, the "eternal" city ruined, Caesar himself killed or exiled, and the citizens enslaved or murdered. Had the early heroes, to whom we owe our independence remained silent under the impositions of the crown of England, we still might be under the yoke of Great Britain, and our laws, both civil and religious, might to-day flow from the throne of Victoria. Had Christ, after withstanding the delusions of Satan, folded his arms in idleness, Christianity would to-day be as devoid of effect as in the days of Herod. It was only by a continued effort that He found favor in the sight of his followers. It is by the application of its power, the perseverance of its energy, the patience of its hope and the invincible will of God that the cause of Christ is conquering all the ends of the earth, and to-day there is not a seashore upon the face of the earth upon whose banks the batteries of heaven have not been opened, and upon whose sands the song of redemption is not sung, and where prayers are not offered. To-day we cannot sing that old missionary hymn:

"From Greenland's icy mountains,"
but that our souls are charmed by its solemn strains, and made to rejoice within us that

"From India's coral strand"
the joyful song to which the shepherds of the East listened with sacred joy, and which we sing with unbounded gladness, is echoed and re-echoed with never dying peals over the stormy seas, and barren deserts to

"Where Africa's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand."

It is labor that lays low the mighty oak of the forest, it is labor that unites ocean with ocean by iron bands, and continent with continent by the magnetic wire, and it requires labor to convert souls. If one half of the time, money, and labor that is spent for the non-essentials of life, were spent for the conversion of souls, this world would become a little Eden not very dissimilar to the Eden of long ago. Labor builds up, but idleness tears down. Labor brings about means, and idleness consumes them. Labor ennobles, but idleness degrades. Labor brings about the object of this life, but idleness defeats it. Labor makes orators, statesmen and philosophers, but idleness makes spendthrifts, rascals and fools. Look about you and see the "mischief" resulting from this mother-idleness. Across the way stands a house that is fast becoming dilapidated. A little farther on is a farm all grown up with weeds and shrubs. All around you are wrecks—human wrecks—which are fast sinking into utter ruin. They are not only sinking themselves, but they are dragging others with them.

There are many persons who are industrious in the workshop, the counting room, and the field, but, spiritually, they are idle. While they are on the road to honor and fame in a temporal sense, they are on the road to dishonor and shame in a spiritual sense. He, whose time and faculties of the soul are not engaged in good employment, sinks into evil habits. So much truth is there in this, that although periods of relaxation are desirable, there is great danger of continuing them to an undue length. Addison, in the *Spectator*, says: "There are few indeed who know how to be idle and innocent: every diversion they take is at the expense of some one virtue or another, and their first step out of business is into vice or folly." Says Guthrie, the great European orator: "The purest water left to stagnate grows putrid; and the finest soil thrown into fallow soon throws up a crop of weeds."

The same refinement that brings us new pleasures exposes us to new pains.